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Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child
Eightieth session
14 January–1 February 2019
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
Consideration of reports of States parties

List of issues in relation to the combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of Bahrain

The State party is requested to submit in writing additional, updated information (10,700 words maximum), if possible before 12 October 2018. The Committee may take up all aspects of children's rights set out in the Convention during the dialogue with the State party.

Part I

1. Please report on progress to adopt various child-related legislative bills, including the draft amendment to the Child Act, inter alia introducing juvenile courts and raising the age of criminal responsibility to 15 years, the draft Law on the Family and the draft Law on Civil Society. Please also specify progress made in establishing a regulatory framework for the business sector regarding the impact of its activities on children's rights.

2. Please provide information on the outcomes of the implementation of the National Strategy for Children 2013–2017, and how its implementation has been monitored and evaluated. Please also provide information on the legal framework and decision-making powers of the National Committee for Childhood and how recent reforms have strengthened its authority and capacity to effectively coordinate all activities related to the implementation of the Convention at cross-sectoral, national and local levels.

3. Please clarify how Decision No. 1 of 2016 of the Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Religious Endowments contributes to raising the minimum age for marriage to 18 years for both girls and boys and to prohibiting child marriage. Please also provide information on measures taken to raise awareness of the harmful consequences of child marriage and on the impact of such measures.

4. Please provide detailed information on the legal, policy and awareness-raising measures taken to address the legal and de facto discrimination experienced by girls, children with disabilities, Bidoon and Ajam children and children born to foreign or stateless fathers. Please specify how these children's access to health care, education and other social services is ensured on an equal basis with other children, including through Act No. 35 of 2009.

5. Please advise on the measures taken to ensure the right of children to be heard in all legal and administrative proceedings affecting them, including custody and divorce cases, and whether any legislation has been adopted or amended to integrate the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. Please also provide information on any awareness-

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raising programmes, including campaigns, to promote the meaningful participation of all children at all levels of society.

6. Please provide information on the measures taken to address the obstacles to amending the Citizenship Act to ensure the right of all children to acquire the nationality of the State party through their mothers. Please also explain whether there is an identification and referral mechanism for children who are undocumented or at risk of statelessness, in particular Ajam and Bidoon children.

7. Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure respect for children's right to freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly and access to appropriate information. Please indicate how many children and/or their parents have been detained under Royal Decree No. 23 of 2013 for participating in a demonstration or public gathering.

8. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure the effective implementation of Ministerial Decree No. 14 of 2012 prohibiting the use of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by the police, including of children, and the number of prosecutions of alleged perpetrators and sanctions for those convicted. Please also provide information on the capacity of the National Human Rights Institution to receive, investigate and refer complaints in a child-friendly and gender-sensitive manner.

9. Please specify any measures taken, including legislative reforms or policy measures, not to treat child victims of violence or abuse as offenders and to prohibit the practice of marriage between child victims and abusers. Please also clarify whether Act No. 17 of 2015 on domestic violence specifies sanctions for perpetrators and remedies for victims, and whether there have been any prosecutions under this legislation.

10. Please provide information on the measures taken to implement the Minister of Labour Decree No. 23 and enforce applicable sanctions against persons violating existing legislation against child labour. Please also inform the Committee on the measures taken to prevent the exploitation of children, in particular foreign girls in domestic work.

11. Please provide updated information concerning the timeline for adoption of the draft bill to amend the Child Act. Please also clarify if the amendment will ensure that the deprivation of liberty of children in conflict with the law is used only as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time. Please also provide information on rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for children in conflict with the law.

12. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that all children who are victims and/or witnesses of crime are provided with the protection required by the Convention. Please also explain how child victims of violence, abuse or neglect and their families are provided with effective remedies and support, including recovery and social reintegration assistance.

Part II

13. The Committee invites the State party to provide a brief update (no more than three pages) on the information presented in its report with regard to:

(a) New bills or laws, and their respective regulations;

(b) New institutions (and their mandates) or institutional reforms;

(c) Recently introduced policies, programmes and action plans and their scope and financing;

(d) Recent ratifications of human rights instruments.

Part III

Data, statistics and other information, if available

14. Please provide consolidated information for the past three years on the budget lines regarding children and social sectors by indicating the percentage of each budget line in terms of the total national budget and the gross national product. Please also provide information on the geographic allocation of those resources.

15. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data disaggregated by age, sex, ethnic origin, national origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on:

(a) Children who are registered at birth or at a later time, in particular Bidoon and Ajam children;

(b) Girls under 18 years of age who are married;

(c) Working children, disaggregated by the type of work they do;

(d) The number of cases of abuse and violence against children, including those involving corporal punishment, that have been investigated, the number of perpetrators prosecuted and the sentences imposed;

(e) Cases of sexual violence and rape involving children and the outcomes thereof, including the penalties imposed on perpetrators and the reparations afforded to victims.

16. Please provide data disaggregated by age, sex, socioeconomic background, ethnic origin and geographic location regarding the situation of children deprived of a family environment, for the past three years, on the number of children:

(a) Separated from their parents;

(b) Placed in institutions, disaggregated according to the duration of the placement;

(c) Placed with foster families.

17. Please provide data, disaggregated by age, sex, type of disability, ethnic origin and geographic location, for the past three years, on the number of children with disabilities:

(a) Living with their families;

(b) Living in institutions;

(c) Attending regular primary schools;

(d) Attending regular secondary schools;

(e) Attending special schools;

(f) Out of school;

(g) Abandoned by their families.

18. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data disaggregated by age, sex, type of offence, ethnic and national origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on children in conflict with the law:

(a) Arrested;

(b) In pretrial detention;

(c) In detention;

(d) In diversion programmes of any kind.

19. Please provide the Committee with an update of any data in the report that may have been outdated by more recent data collected or other new developments.

20. In addition, the State party may list areas affecting children that it considers to be of priority with regard to the implementation of the Convention.